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**ABSTRACT**

This issue of "Interchange" contains a reading, discussion questions, activities, and ideas to help educators teach secondary students and adults about immigration issues. Students are expected to read and discuss the reading entitled "Immigration: Questions and Answers." This reading analyzes the concerns about current levels of immigration and refugee admission and responds to the questions most asked with the most reliable and up-to-date information available. Also included in the newsletter are discussion questions, activities, and research ideas designed for use with the reading. Group activities involve students in designing an immigration policy of their own and listing and discussing positive contributions and negative impacts of immigration. Two examples of ideas for further study include writing a paper on the many immigrants to the United States who became Nobel prize winners or became well-known in the sciences, arts, or politics and researching local attitudes toward legal and illegal immigration by conducting a survey of the student body, parents, or the community. Also provided in the newsletter is a list of organizations with an interest in immigration and refugee issues. (RM)

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# inter-change

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## Teaching About Immigration Issues

In a five to four vote, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on June 15 that children of illegal immigrants have a constitutional right to a free public education. In so doing, it struck down a Texas law under which local school districts could deny admission to such children or charge them tuition. The decision hinged upon the 14th Amendment which says that no state may "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

Chief Justice Warren Burger in a dissenting opinion charged that the ruling "employs, and in my view abuses, the 14th Amendment in an effort to become an omnipotent and omniscient problem solver."

Texas had defended its law in lower courts in part because of the cost of educating an estimated 110,000 children who are in Texas illegally. However, during 1980, only 11,000 illegal alien children entered the schools out of a total enrollment of 2.2 million.

In a June 18, 1982 *Washington Post* column, William Raspberry asserted that "... the Texas situation exists because of the federal government's failure to establish and enforce a reasonable and coherent immigrant policy. If the court had been able to reach that issue, it might have decided the children should be educated, in Texas, but at the federal government's expense."

Earlier the same month, the National Association of Counties held a meeting in Washington, D.C. to make the same point. They addressed the financial impact of granting legal resident status to the several million illegal immigrants in the United States who qualify under immigration reform legislation now being debated in the Congress. The Association estimates that the total cost for welfare payments and medical care in the first year alone will exceed \$1 billion dollars and that state and

local governments' share will be over half a billion dollars.

How accurate these monetary estimates are or, for that matter, the estimates of the number of illegal immigrants in the U.S. is part of the concern and confusion surrounding immigration issues. These feelings seem justified. Immigration involves cherished values in conflict with each other—our traditional hospitality versus our desire to protect the quality of U.S. life. In addition, immigration data are notoriously imprecise; no one knows exactly the numbers of people who migrate here yearly, legally or illegally, or what economic and social impacts their arrival has.

The reading, *Immigration: Questions and Answers*, attempts to analyze the concerns about current levels of immigration and refugee admissions and to

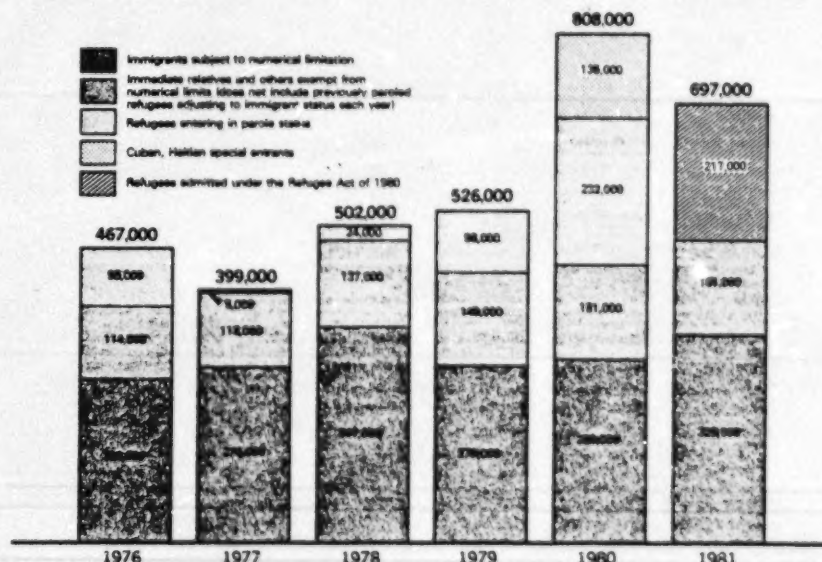
respond to the questions most asked with the most reliable and up-to-date information available. In this issue of *Interchange* are discussion questions, activities, and ideas for further research to help educators deal with these interesting but often emotional issues in the classroom or adult forum. The editors of *Interchange* welcome your responses to the reading and the educational activities.

### Guide to Immigration: Questions and Answers

The following questions, activities and research ideas are designed for use with the reading, *Immigration: Questions and Answers*, which accompanies this issue of *Interchange*.

(continued on page two)

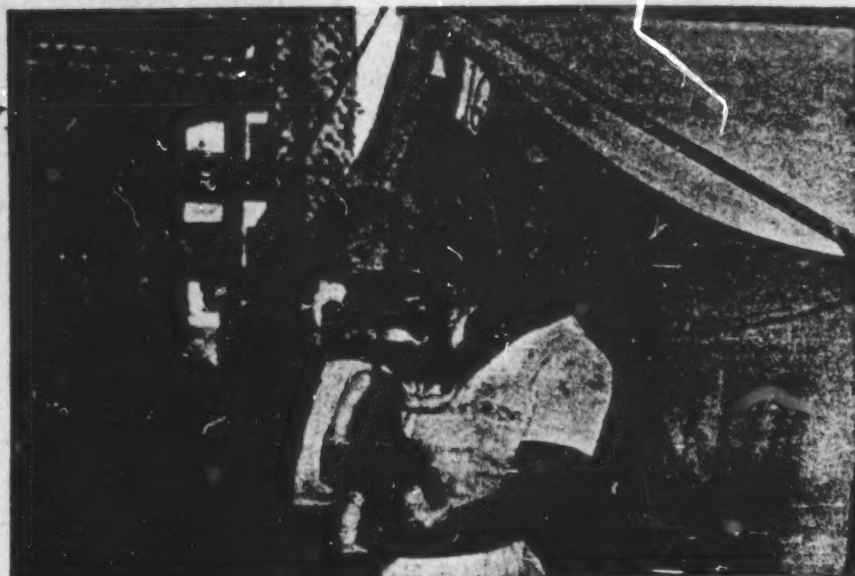
## LEGAL IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES



Source: Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, U.S. *Immigration Policy and the National Interest, Final Report* (Washington, DC: 1981).

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UNHCR Photo by S. Farkas

The U.S. receives more refugees than any other country in the world.

### Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. Why is it that the U.S. receives approximately twice as many immigrants and refugees as all other countries combined?
2. Historically, what has been the impact of immigration on the development of the U.S.—economically, socially, politically?
3. Should the U.S. continue to receive large numbers of legal immigrants? Why or why not?
4. Should the U.S. continue to receive large numbers of refugees? Why or why not?
5. Should the U.S. continue to receive large numbers of illegal immigrants? Why or why not?
6. Should there be different criteria used when dealing with legal immigrants, refugees and illegal immigrants?
7. How could the U.S. reduce or eliminate illegal immigration without resorting to "police state" tactics?
8. Some people contend that in terms of the variety of ethnic groups living in the U.S., the "melting pot" ideal is less accurate a description than a "rumpy stew" or "tossed salad." Do racial, ethnic and religious groups mix well in your community? Give examples. Are there conflicts? Give examples. What would be (or has been) the impact of immigration on cooperation among various groups? What are some ways to foster improved relations among groups?
9. Some individuals and groups are concerned about the impact of con-

- tinued population growth on the quality of life in the U.S., in particular its food and energy resources and the environment. They believe immigration should be curtailed to protect the environment for current U.S. citizens and their descendants. Do you agree or disagree?
10. Some say that immigration from poorer to wealthier countries is inevitable and that increased foreign aid to poorer countries could help reduce the outward flow. What conditions in poorer countries could be improved by foreign aid (e.g., jobs, health care, education)? How much foreign aid would be necessary? Could the U.S. guarantee that such foreign aid would be used for its intended purposes?
11. Is the "brain drain" a valid argument for reducing legal immigration to the U.S.? Would foreign doctors, scientists and skilled workers find adequate jobs in their own countries?
12. Should the cost of resettling refugees be borne by the U.S. Federal government alone, by the local and state governments involved or by a cost-sharing plan? If by cost-sharing, what percent should be the Federal government's share?
13. The idea of a bilingual society has become controversial. Should the purpose of bilingual education be to help the newcomer learn English or to help the newcomer retain his or her own language and culture? Should signs in airports, train stations, public offices and on highways be in English and Spanish (and perhaps Vietnamese in certain areas)?
14. The Supreme Court ruled on June 15, 1982 that the children of illegal

aliens are entitled to free public education. The court split 5-4 on this decision. If you were a Supreme Court judge, which side would you have been on?

15. Legislation introduced to Congress in mid-1982 would grant amnesty—the right to stay legally in the U.S. and ultimately to become citizens—to illegal immigrants who have resided continuously in the U.S. since before January 1, 1982 (or 1980, if the House of Representatives version is used). Do you think this is a reasonable solution to the problem? What would be your reaction if you had been waiting several years to immigrate legally to the U.S. (some wait as much as 10 years)? What would be the alternatives to amnesty?

### Group Activities

1. Work in small groups to design an immigration policy of your own. It should include yearly overall numbers admitted, country limits (if any), preferences (if any), refugee policy and policies to deal with illegal immigration.
2. List as many countries as you can that have been the original homes of immigrants to the U.S. Put colored pins or otherwise mark the places on a world map. Which countries or regions are least represented? Why do you think that is?
3. List the countries or regions your ancestors came from to the best of your knowledge. List the places in the U.S. where your ancestors settled when they first arrived.
4. List as many positive contributions of immigration as you can. Next to it, list as many of the negative impacts of immigration as you can. On balance, do the benefits outweigh the drawbacks? Why or why not?

### Ideas for Further Study

1. Write a paper on the many immigrants to the U.S. who became Nobel prizewinners or became well-known in the sciences, arts or politics.
2. Research local attitudes toward legal and illegal immigration by conducting a survey of the student body, parents or the community.

(continued on page four)

Additional copies of Immigration: Questions and Answers and this issue of Interchange may be ordered from PRB at \$1 per single set; two or more sets, 75¢ each. Include \$1 shipping/handling charge.

### Ideas for Further Study

(continued from page two)

3. Do a case study of one (recent) immigrant or refugee family and how they have fared in the U.S.
4. Research the conditions in one of the major "sending countries" in terms of the economic, political or social reasons why large numbers of people wish to emigrate.
5. Gather data from local or state officials on the amount and cost of social services, such as welfare, medical care and schooling extended to immigrants in your area; gather data on the economic contributions of the immigrants.
6. Give a critique of the immigration reform legislation introduced by Senator Alan Simpson and Representative Romano Mazzoli as presented in the reading. Be sure to watch newspapers for the latest versions of the legislation which will continue to undergo modifications before it is passed by Congress. Are the provisions of the bill reasonable? Too restrictive? Too lenient? Should refugees be included in the overall ceiling of legal immigrants or treated as a separate category to be dealt with on a case by case basis?
7. Report on the history of immigration policy in the U.S. and how it has changed over the years.
8. Report on citizens' reactions to immigrants of certain ethnic groups in our nation's past such as the Chinese, the Irish and Southern and Eastern Europeans. Include legislation such as the Chinese Exclusion Act and the restrictive laws of the 1920s.
9. Do a comparative study of the immigration positions of two or more organizations, such as F.A.I.R. (Federation of American Immigration Reform), the National Center for Immigrants' Rights, the Environmental Fund, M.A.L.D.E.F. (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund), which differ widely on the issues.
10. Some say that U.S. law defines refugees according to our foreign policy at the time—for example, that those fleeing a communist government are more likely to be welcomed than those fleeing a right-wing dictatorship. Research recent refugee policy and practices; analyze how fair or unfair our policies are.

### Organizations

Below is a list of organizations with an interest in immigration and refugee issues.

Center for Immigration Policy and  
Refugee Assistance  
Georgetown University  
Washington, DC 20057

Citizens' Committee for Immigration  
Reform  
Suite 1000  
1828 L Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

Church World Service  
Immigration and Refugee Program  
475 Riverside Drive  
New York, NY 10027

Environmental Fund  
1302 18th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

Federation for American Immigration  
Reform  
2028 P Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20026

Hebrew Immigration Aid Society  
200 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10003

Indochina Refugee Action Center  
1424 18th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

League of United Latin American  
Citizens  
P.O. Drawer 5427  
Corpus Christi, TX 78405

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee  
Service  
360 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10010

Mexican American Legal Defense and  
Educational Fund  
1411 K Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20005

National Association of Counties  
1735 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20006

National Center for Immigrants' Rights  
1511 K Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20005

National Forum on Immigration and  
Refugee Policy  
329 East Capitol Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003

Population Reference Bureau  
1337 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

Zero Population Growth  
1346 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

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- "How America Studies Itself: The U.S. Census," February 1980
- "Population and Hawaii: A Case Study," November 1980
- "U.S. Population Data Teaching Package," March 1981 (single copy, \$2; two or more, \$1.75 each)
- "Growing Old in America," September 1981 (single copy, \$2.00; 2 or more, \$1.75 each)
- "World Population: Toward the Next Century," November 1981
- "Population Education: An Audiovisual Approach," December 1981
- "Children: A Constant Concern" with the 1982 World's Children Data Sheet, April 1982
- "Immigration: Questions and Answers," July 1982

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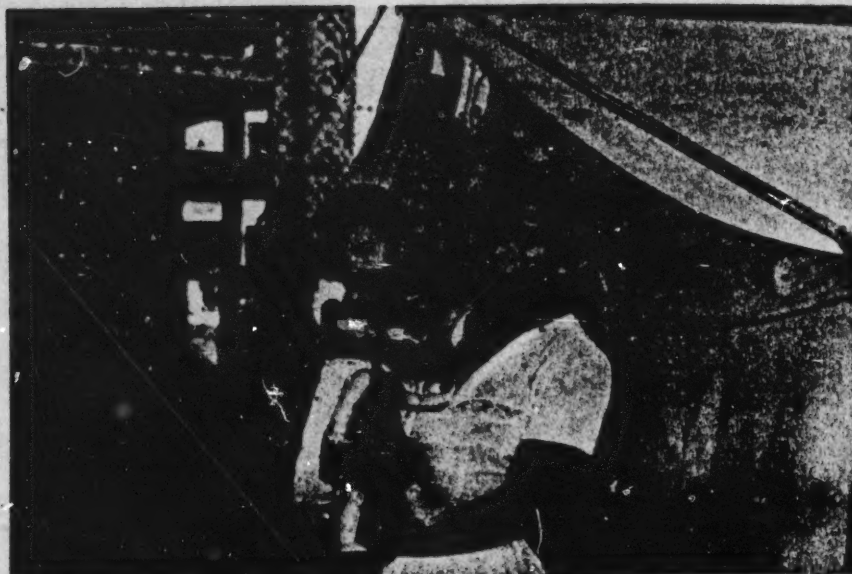
### Interchange is . . .

a publication of the Population Reference Bureau, published quarterly during the academic year. This issue was written by Elaine M. Murphy and Patricia Cancellor. Educators may receive a one-year free subscription to Interchange upon request. The purpose of the newsletter is to further the goal of infusing population materials into U.S. schools by: (1) presenting information on population-related issues; (2) distributing classroom materials; (3) reviewing developments in the field of population education. Interchange depends upon an exchange of information and ideas and thus openly solicits correspondence from its readers.

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# IMMIGRATION: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



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# IMMIGRATION: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

by Elaine M. Murphy and Patricia Cancellier

The United States was founded in the 18th century by immigrants and the children of immigrants. In its relatively brief history, the U.S. has continued receiving immigrants, admitting a greater number than any other country in the world.

Immigration contributed significantly to the needs of the new and expanding nation and at the same time offered opportunities to people from other lands suffering political, economic or religious oppression. Immigrants have helped to build railroads, industries and cities and have left an indelible mark on the arts, sciences and political life of the U.S.

Yet, our long tradition of accepting immigrants and refugees is increasingly challenged. The American public, concerned about unemployment, inflation and the environment, now questions the desirability of continuing to accept large numbers of immigrants and refugees. A 1980 Roper poll found that 80 percent favored reducing legal immigration and 91 percent favored eliminating or controlling illegal immigration.

While feelings run high—there are staunch supporters of liberal immigration policies as well—information is scanty. Just how many immigrants and refugees have entered the U.S. in recent years? What is the extent of illegal immigration? What is the economic impact of illegal immigration? What new policies have been proposed? What is really happening? The questions below are among those most asked about this complex and troubling issue.

**Q. How many people migrate to the United States each year, legally, illegally or as refugees?**

**A.** It must be said at the start that figures for immigration, even legal immigration, are inadequately documented. For illegal immigration, the numbers range widely and are only "best estimates".

In recent years, the number of people entering the U.S. as immi-

grants—legal or illegal—or as refugees is estimated at close to or over one million per year. For 1980, using a high but widely used estimate of half a million illegal immigrants, the total was 1.3 million. Not since the first two decades of this century, when large numbers of Southern and Eastern Europeans migrated to the U.S., have the totals been over one million per year. In 1981, using similar assumptions about illegal immigration, the number of immigrants and refugees totaled close to 1.2 million.

The U.S. receives more immigrants for permanent settlement and more refugees than any other country in the world. In fact, the number is approximately twice as large as that received by all other nations in the world combined. However, given the large base population of the U.S.—230 million in 1981—the numbers do not represent the highest per capita reception of immigrants and refugees among countries.

Of the estimated 1.3 million entering the U.S. in 1980, slightly over 800,000 entered legally. Of these, according to figures from the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, 440,000 en-

tered through regular immigration channels and close to 370,000 came as refugees. The number of refugees in 1980 was particularly large due to the flows from Cuba (the "Mariel" boatlift) and Haiti. The remaining 500,000 represent a commonly accepted estimate of annual illegal immigration.

Legal immigration throughout the 1970s averaged about 425,000 per year, exclusive of refugees; for 1979-1981, refugees averaged about 200,000. Illegal immigration is far more difficult to calculate. Estimates range from 100,000 to over 1 million undocumented entries per year. The 500,000 figure is widely used.

In the early 1970s, estimates of the number of illegal immigrants residing in the U.S. ranged from 2 to 12 million, a range so wide that it was impossible to base policy decisions on the figures. According to Charles Keely of the Population Council the best estimates suggest that there may now be between 3.5 and 5 million people living in the U.S. illegally. Many others use a range of 3 to 6 million.

**Q. The United States population is still growing; what proportion**

## U.S. Immigration Figures

|                                                                                                   |                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Average annual legal immigration in the 1970s                                                     | 423,000          |
| Legal immigration (not including refugees)                                                        |                  |
| 1980                                                                                              | 441,000          |
| 1981                                                                                              | 480,000          |
| Refugees                                                                                          |                  |
| 1980 (including Cubans and Haitians)                                                              | 367,000          |
| 1981                                                                                              | 217,000          |
| Estimated number of illegal immigrants living in the U.S.                                         | 3-6 million      |
| Estimated annual entry of illegal immigrants                                                      | 100,000-500,000+ |
| 1981 immigration (including estimated 500,000 illegal immigrants) as percent of total population: |                  |
| 1.2 million + 229.8 million                                                                       | .5 percent       |
| Total immigration (legal, refugees, illegal) as percent of annual population growth, 1981         | 43 percent       |
| U.S. population                                                                                   |                  |
| 1981                                                                                              | 229.8 million    |
| 1982                                                                                              | 232.0 million    |

Sources: Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, *U.S. Immigration Policy and the National Interest* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, March 1981), pp. 93; *World Population Data Sheet* (Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau, April 1981 and April 1982).

of its annual population growth is due to immigration?

A. Immigration accounted for one-third of the population growth in 1980, if illegal immigrants are not included. If one uses the half-million figure for illegal immigration, it accounted for over 50 percent of the growth.

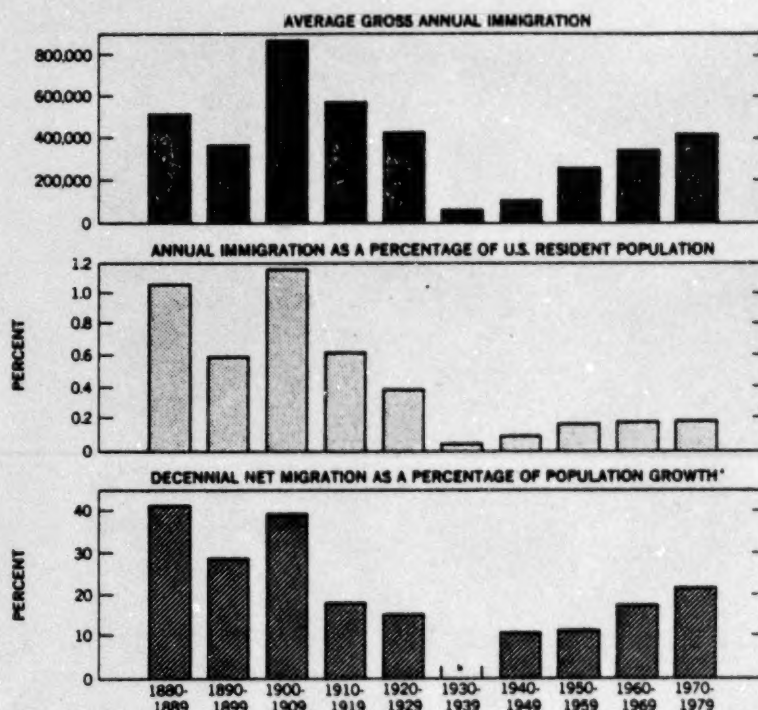
Annual population growth of a nation—or city or town—is made up of *natural increase* (births minus deaths) and *net migration* (immigrants minus emigrants). Alone or together these factors account for 100 percent of annual growth.

It must be remembered that the percent of growth due to net migration rises and falls in relation to the amount of growth due to natural increase. Thus in times of low fertility, even a modest amount of net migration contributes a greater percent to total growth than a relatively large amount during times of high fertility. Figure 1 (bottom panel) illustrates this phenomenon for the 1940s and 1950s. Although immigrants in the 1950s numbered more than twice as many as in the 1940s, the proportion of population growth they represented was the same—about 10 percent—in both decades. This is because of the much higher fertility in the 1950s, the peak of the post-World War II baby boom. Net legal migration has during certain decades accounted for a significant proportion of growth: about 40 percent in 1880-1889 and 1900-1909, and over 20 percent in the 1970s, a time of low fertility. By 2020-2029, if our current "below replacement" fertility continues, immigration will account for all population growth in the U.S. as deaths eventually will exceed births.

**Q. What have been the past patterns of immigration to the United States?**

A. Statistics on immigration to the U.S. were not gathered until 1820 when 8,385 entrants were recorded. Methods of counting those entering and leaving left much to be desired, and while improved, even today the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) figures are imprecise. One problem is that while legal immigrants are counted, no one knows how many people annually emigrate (i.e., leave with intention to settle elsewhere). Until recently, the Census Bureau estimated that

**Figure 1. Levels and Rates of Legal Immigration**



Source: Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, *U.S. Immigration Policy and the National Interest, Final Report* (Washington, DC: 1981).

<sup>a</sup>Decennial net migration as a percentage of population growth equals total decennial population increase minus natural population increase (births minus deaths) divided by total population increase.

<sup>b</sup>Emigration exceeded immigration by 85,000.

40,000 people leave annually while another study—more widely accepted—puts the number at 100,000.

From 1820 to 1900, over 19 million legal immigrants were counted. By the end of 1980, the total number of legal immigrants recorded during 160 years of record-keeping had risen to over 50 million.

These numbers hide the ebb and flow of immigration: levels from year-to-year and decade-to-decade. Figure 1 (top panel) shows the average annual legal immigration by decade from the 1880s through the 1970s. The last two decades of the 19th century and the first two of the 20th saw enormous waves of European immigrants arriving in search of a better life. Legal immigration reached its high volume between 1880 and 1920; over 1 million immigrants entered in each of six years: 1905, 1906, 1907, 1910, 1913 and 1914. By comparison, legal immigration in the 1970s averaged about 425,000 a year. In 1980, the figure jumped to over 800,000 with the arrival of large numbers of Southeast Asians, Cuban and Haitian refugees. In 1981,

there were close to 700,000 legal immigrants. The lowest number of legal immigrants was recorded during the 1930s, the decade of the Great Depression.

The middle panel of Figure 1 shows that in the last 100 years, the annual number of immigrants has been small in comparison to the population already here. For only two decades—1880-1889 and 1900-1909—did the annual number of immigrants exceed one percent of the resident population.

**Q. What are the ethnic origins of immigrants? How have ethnic patterns of immigration changed in response to immigration law?**

A. Throughout the 19th century, the vast majority of immigrants came from Northern and Western Europe (see Figure 2). For almost 100 years after American independence, there were virtually no laws governing the admission of aliens; since that time, immigration laws have increasingly determined which countries can send migrants to the U.S.

The first country to be affected by U.S. immigration restrictions was China. Between 1848 and 1882, approximately 100,000 Chinese contract laborers had been imported to work on the railroads and in the mines. Many Americans felt the Chinese were taking jobs away from and undercutting the wages of citizens. In 1882 Congress passed a law which forbade the immigration of any Chinese workers. This law remained in effect until 1943.

The peak immigration years of 1880 through 1920—consisting predominately of Southern and Eastern Europeans—led to the enactment of laws prescribing the physical and mental health, financial status and morals of aliens. These discriminatory laws also included restrictions based on race and political persuasion.

The Immigration Act of 1929 established an annual quota totaling about 154,000 people. It also continued the 1924 legislation restricting or prohibiting immigration from certain countries in an effort to retain the racial and ethnic composition of the nation's population as of 1890. This had the effect of favoring Northern and Western Europeans over immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe and other regions of the world. Note the shifts in the relative percentage of these groups between 1901-1930 and 1931-1960 (Figure 2).

The 1965 and subsequent amendments to the Immigration Act of 1952 shifted from restrictions based on national origins to priorities based on family reunification and needed skills and professions. As of 1981, 270,000 people a year are allowed to enter the U.S. as legal immigrants, with no more than 20,000 from any one country. Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens are admitted in addition to the 270,000 limit; the number in this "unlimited" category averaged about 136,000 a year until recently, rose to over 150,000 in 1980, and may go higher in coming years.

The system established by the 1965 amendment has meant a dramatic change in immigrants by geographic origin. Eighty percent of immigrants admitted from 1820 to 1964 were European. In the late 1970s, Europeans were only 13 percent of the total, while Latin Americans made up 42 percent and Asians

39 percent of all immigrants (see Figure 2).

#### Q. Where do most illegal immigrants come from?

A. About 50 to 60 percent of those who enter the U.S. illegally come from Mexico, according to most estimates. Most of the remaining undocumented entrants come from other Latin American countries such as Guatemala, El Salvador, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. A large number of these migrants come through Mexico and cross over the Mexican-American border into the U.S. Others come by boat or plane, landing in various locations, such as Miami and New York City. Illegal immigrants also come from, among other countries, Ireland, Greece, Nigeria, Iran, India, Thailand, South Korea and the Philippines, usually entering on the East or West Coast.

Although crossing undetected over the borders is the most common method of illegal entry into the U.S., there are other ways of becoming an illegal immigrant. Some people give false information on their entry form (e.g., in response to the question asking for intended length of time in the U.S.). Some use fraudulent documents and some overstay their work or student visas.

Just as immigration laws in the past influenced the volume and ethnic composition of legal immigrants,

recent changes in the law have influenced patterns of illegal immigration. For example, because of labor shortages during World War II, beginning in the early 1940s, U.S. growers hired Mexican farm workers ("braceros") to do seasonal agricultural work. Under this Bracero Program, terms of employment were specified in agreements between the governments of Mexico and the U.S. By the late 1950s, about 400,000 Mexican laborers entered the U.S. annually.

In 1964 Congress ended the Bracero Program, in part because of protests from U.S. farm workers and unions, and in part because of criticism from churches and other groups concerned about the deplorable living conditions of the migrant workers. The following year an amendment to the immigration law placed a ceiling for the first time on the number of immigrant visas from the Western Hemisphere, further reducing opportunities to migrate legally to the U.S. from Mexico.

The 1965 Amendment abolished national quotas and established instead a seven-category preference system, favoring close relatives of U.S. citizens allowed in without numerical limit and permanent resident aliens, those with needed occupational skills and refugees. For the Eastern Hemisphere, a ceiling of 170,000 was established, with a 20,000 per country limit. The ceiling placed on the Western Hemisphere was set at 120,000 with no



Most undocumented entrants come from Latin American countries to escape poverty or to seek jobs.

WORLD BANK PHOTO by Jaime Martin

preference system or per country limit.

The immediate impact of this policy change and the end of the Bracero Program was to make it much more difficult for Mexicans and other Latin Americans to migrate legally to the U.S. unless they had immediate family members who were already U.S. citizens. Consequently large number of Mexicans came to the U.S. as undocumented immigrants who otherwise would have entered legally under the old policy of unlimited entry from the Western Hemisphere. This change is seen in Figure 3 in the dramatic increase in the proportion of Mexicans apprehended from 50 percent in 1965 to 93 percent in 1979. It must be remembered that each apprehension does not represent one person, since the same person may be apprehended twice or more in the same year. Because of the closeness of Mexico to the U.S., Mexicans are more likely to cross back and forth. In addition, because the INS concentrates its apprehension efforts in the Southwest, Mexicans are overrepresented in apprehension statistics.

**Q. How many refugees are arriving? Where do they come from?**

**A.** The Communist victory in Vietnam and the collapse of pro-U.S. governments in Cambodia and Laos led to a mass exodus of refugees from Southeast Asia in the mid-1970s. Many of these people became known as "boat people" because they escaped their homelands in small, often unseaworthy boats. Many perished at sea.

## The Refugee Act of 1980

1. Redefines "refugee" as a person fleeing persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.
2. Provides standardized federal funding for up to three years for refugee resettlement programs administered by private voluntary agencies. Each agency is free to raise additional money and design its own resettlement programs.
3. Through 1982, allows up to 50,000 refugees to be admitted to the U.S. In addition, the President in consultation with Congress may raise this quota if conditions so require; for 1982, 140,000 slots are allocated. Beginning in 1983, the annual refugee quota will be set each year by the President in consultation with Congress. The President also retains parole authority (primarily intended for individuals, but used in the past to admit large groups) and the right to respond to emergency refugee situations.
4. Allows the government to waive most of the grounds for exclusion from permanent-resident status, such as illiteracy, so that refugees can qualify eventually for citizenship. Moreover, refugees are not counted as part of the world quota of 270,000 or the country quota of 20,000, but are a separate category.
5. Grants asylum to aliens in the U.S. who cannot safely return home; up to 5,000 asylees per year can obtain permission to stay in the U.S.

Source: *Immigration and Public Policy: Who Can Become an American?* (Newton, MA: Education Development Center, 1981 Field-test Edition), pp. 87-88.

The largest number of these refugees were received by the U.S. which passed special legislation—the Indochinese Refugee Act—to provide funds for their resettlement. Since 1975, the U.S. has welcomed about 50,000 Indochinese to its shores. In addition, between 1977 and 1980, 50,000 Russian and East European Jews fleeing anti-Semitism were accepted as refugees.

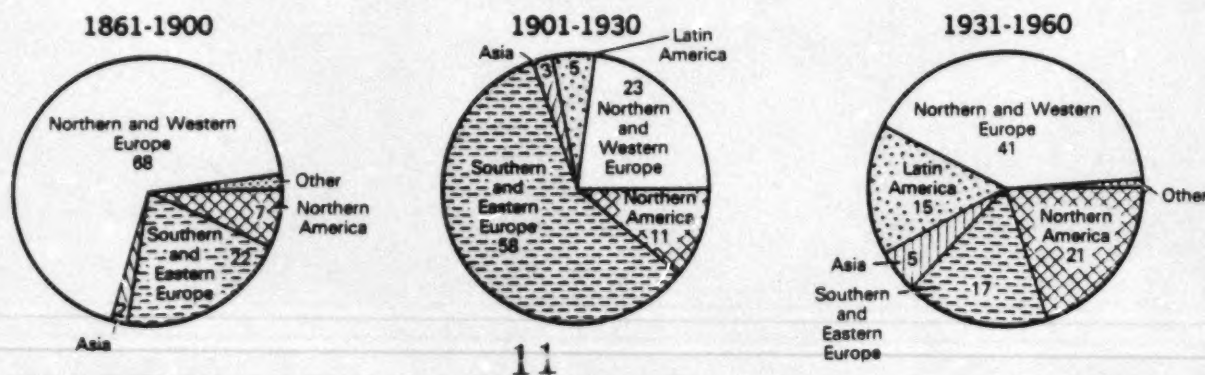
In 1980, 125,000 Cubans and 10,000 Haitians—a new wave of "boat people"—found refuge in the United States. At the time of their entry, the Cubans and Haitians under existing law would have been considered illegal or undocumented aliens because they crossed U.S. borders without permission. Nonetheless, public response to the boat people as political refugees led to

the passage of a special Cuban-Haitian Entrant Program, which legalized their entries. This special program also permitted most of the entrants (the Cubans, at least) to qualify for eventual naturalization.

Embarrassingly, just before the Cuban and Haitian arrivals, Congress had passed the Refugee Act of 1980 which was designed to be able to deal effectively with any refugee situation. The Cubans and Haitians, however, did not fit the provisions of the Act and special legislation was again necessary. (The major points of the Refugee Act are outlined in a box on this page.)

In 1980, because of the exceptionally large number of Cuban and Haitian entrants, refugee totals reached about 370,000 (Figure 4). For the 1979-1981 period, the aver-

**Figure 2. Legal Immigrants Admitted to the United States by Region of Birth**



Source: Leon F. Bouvier, *Immigration and Its Impact on U.S. Society*, Population Trends and Public Policy Series No. 2 (Washington, DC: Population

age annual number of refugees admitted was 200,000. Whether such levels continue depends on the nature of conflicts in "trouble spots" around the globe which produce refugees and the numbers set by the President in consultation with Congress. In turn the latter may reflect public sentiment about high immigration and refugee levels.

**Q. What problems do immigrants (legal and illegal) and refugees face once they reach the United States?**

**A.** Adjusting to a new country—its language, customs and way of life—is a very difficult process. It is particularly difficult for those people who come to the U.S. from a rural, less developed country and who have had little or no contact with an urban, technological society.

Legal immigrants are likely to have an easier time in adapting to the U.S. They are able to plan their move (some have a 5- to 10-year wait), and the vast majority have family members living in the U.S. who can ease their transition to the new culture. Relatives can provide a temporary place to stay, and information about jobs, food, housing and transportation. Those who have no relatives have a job waiting for them.

Refugees, on the other hand, have been forced out of their homeland by war, persecution and famine, and do not make the transition to U.S. life as easily. They have to adjust rapidly to a life that revolves around telephones, automobiles, supermarkets and television.

Refugee assistance organizations do what they can to make life easier

for refugees. They help them find homes and jobs, and try to help them become self-sufficient as soon as possible. But in this time of high unemployment in the U.S., refugees are often resented by the resident population who feel they are taking jobs from citizens or competing for local resources. For example, hostilities developed between American and Vietnamese shrimp fishermen in the Galveston Bay area of Texas in 1981. When Vietnamese refugees moved into that area, they started buying shrimp boats. By 1981, they outnumbered the native fishermen. The natives felt the Vietnamese were overfishing the waters, thereby reducing the shrimp population and their own catch. The Vietnamese felt the Americans were against them because they are such hard workers, and because they are willing to live frugally and save to buy more boats. An American was killed and two Vietnamese boats were burned. Law suits from both sides resulted. The state government ultimately had to place a 2-year moratorium on the licensing of new shrimp boats, and other measures restricting the hours of shrimp fishing in the bay were expected to pass the legislature.

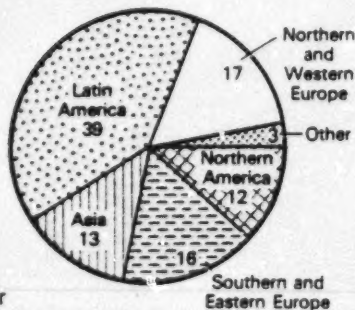
The inability to speak English is an obstacle for many refugees and immigrants. Recent refugee groups have included many people who never learned to read and write their own language, as well as people from cultures which have no written language. This makes learning a new language very difficult. Studies have shown that children learn a new language better when they

know how to read and write their native language first. This is the basis for bilingual education. But this is not always possible with adult language training. Some refugees and immigrants never master English, but instead rely on their children to act as interpreters.

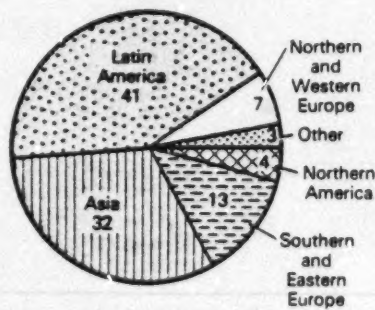
Cultural differences between the U.S. and the refugee's native country create problems for some refugees. Parents see their children adopting American customs and fighting against the traditional ways of their culture. Women, in some instances, abandon their traditional role of homemaker to join the workforce. Many refugees want nothing more than to return to their native country. Social workers report that many refugees suffer from depression, marital problems and family break-up.

Some refugee women have special problems in addition which have to do with their status in society. Most of the recent groups of refugees come from very traditional societies where a woman's role is strictly defined. They maintain the home, raise the children, and in some cases participate in the agricultural work. When they are forced to move to a new country, they lose the support of their extended family (mothers, grandmothers, sisters and cousins). The husband goes out to work, and the farm work the women used to do is no longer a possibility. The woman is isolated at home. Her upbringing and the attitude of her husband may prevent her from seeking the services she needs—language training, orientation to the community, counseling

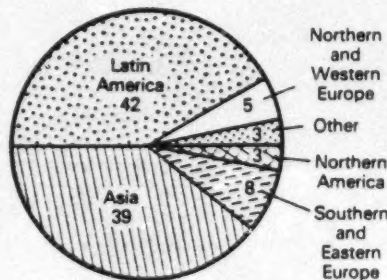
1961-1970



1971-1976



1977-1979



Reference Bureau, 1981. (Numbers show percent of total immigrants from that region.)

help, and medical care. In other cases, the woman is forced into the workplace, often unprepared, leading to anxiety about her performance both on the job and at home.

Immigrants who are in the U.S. illegally have some special problems as well. Their fear of being deported makes them an easy target for employers, landlords and others who want to take advantage of them. It is not uncommon to find them working under deplorable conditions for low pay. A raid on a New York City garment factory, or "sweatshop," found illegal immigrant women—one as old as 90, one a sixth grader—working for \$1 per hour. *Ciro Castillo*, an undocumented farmworker who testified before the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy in 1979, reported:

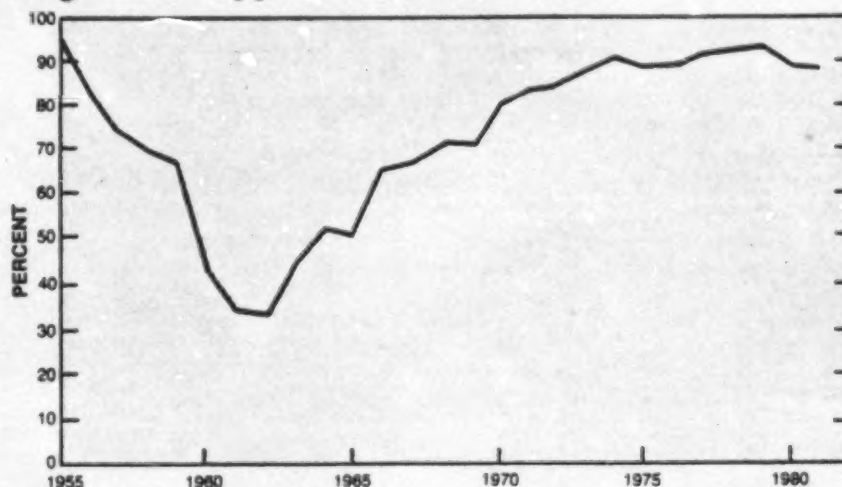
In Florida we work carrying 100-pound bags up ladders that are sometimes 20 feet high. If we fall from a ladder or are otherwise injured on the job we rarely receive Workman's Compensation. Many undocumented workers in Florida live in small house trailers that accommodate more than 20 workers, and often pay high rent for such living space.<sup>1</sup>

**Q. What are the conditions in countries that motivate people to leave? Why do some immigrate illegally?**

**A.** There are many conditions which "push" individuals to leave their countries to seek new homes. Unemployment and underemployment are two important factors that encourage people to leave their native country, temporarily or permanently. The lack of religious, social or political freedom has motivated many people in the past to migrate. The desire to be reunited with one's family is another major factor.

The major sending countries for legal and illegal immigrants—Mexico, Philippines, Cuba, Vietnam, Korea, China, Taiwan, India, Dominican Republic, Haiti and El Salvador—are primarily less developed countries with, in most cases, rapidly growing populations. Their economies have not been able to keep pace with their growing popula-

**Figure 3. Mexicans Apprehended as Percent of Total Illegal-Alien Apprehensions in the U.S.**



Source: U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

tions in creating new jobs. Those that are employed are often underemployed—working at low-level jobs that do not use their skills and talents.

Many of these countries have 40 to 60 percent of their population employed in agriculture. As their populations increase, the amount of agricultural land available per person decreases. Large families—from 4 to 6 children per family—characterize most of these countries. Family farms can only be divided among adult children up to a certain point before the land becomes unproductive or too small to support a family.

Fear of political or religious oppression or political instability has prompted migration for centuries. The U.S. was colonized by people escaping religious persecution. More recently, South Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians were forced to leave their countries when their pro-American governments were overthrown. Thousands of people have fled El Salvador during the past year to escape the war in that country.

While push factors are important, some researchers feel that the factors which "pull" migrants to other countries are even more important. People migrate to improve their situation, and therefore, are drawn to places that promise a better life.

The pull factors are usually the opposite of the push factors. The U.S. "pulls" migrants through the offer of political and religious freedom, better employment opportuni-

ties and higher wages, and in general a higher standard of living.

The push and pull forces do not totally explain why people migrate where they do. According to Everett S. Lee's "Theory of Migration," there are also "intervening obstacles" to be considered by the potential migrant. How difficult is it to get to a country? If people can travel by land, they might be more likely to go than if a long, expensive plane flight is involved. The total unfamiliarity of a new country—different language, culture and way of life—might be a big obstacle to some, whereas having relatives or friends in the destination country or familiarity with people who have been there often—would reduce that obstacle. Television, no doubt, plays a role in familiarizing others with the American way of life, or at least a glamorized version of it.

Most of the major sending countries of immigrants to the U.S. have had extensive contact with the U.S. in the past. The U.S. may have been involved in their country for political reasons—as a supporter of the government—and/or trade reasons.

Mexico is a special case. The U.S. has had a long, shared history with Mexico. In fact, until the Mexican-American war in 1848, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah and parts of Colorado, Kansas and Wyoming were in Mexico. When relations improved again, Mexico and the U.S. developed extensive trade. And, until recently, the border between the

<sup>1</sup>Immigration and Public Policy: Who Can Become An American?, The American Experiment: E Pluribus Unum, Part One (Newton, MA: Education Development Center, 1981 Field-test Edition) p.35.

countries was essentially open, with travel and immigration unrestricted. Mexican-Americans have always inhabited the Southwest and their culture has greatly influenced that area.

The restriction of immigration from the Western Hemisphere in 1965 and the termination of the Bracero Program meant the only legal route to the U.S. was to apply for an immigration visa and wait. By 1970, 70,000 applicants in Mexico were waiting for visas. By 1980, the backlog had grown to 250,000. Many Mexicans have waited up to eight years for a visa. Similar backlogs have occurred in other countries. With such delays, it is not surprising that some people have chosen the illegal route.

**Q. Does current U.S. immigration policy contribute to a "brain drain"?**

**A.** The migration of highly skilled and talented individuals from their native country to another has often been referred to as the "brain drain." While it is unclear whether U.S. policy leads to a brain drain, it certainly makes it easier for the "brains" of other countries to immigrate than for unskilled people. Current U.S. immigration law gives high preference to professionals of exceptional ability, and allows up to 29,000 to immigrate each year.

Many of America's most distinguished scientists are immigrants. A 1961 analysis of the members of the National Academy of Sciences—an elite body of scientists in the U.S.—revealed that 17 percent were born and trained abroad; 6 percent were born abroad but trained in the U.S. A 1968 study of Nobel Prize winners revealed that of the 70 Americans who had received Nobel Prizes in physics, chemistry and medicine, almost 40 percent were of foreign origin, and 16 percent received the award as a foreign national and then moved to the U.S.

There is no doubt that the U.S. does experience a "brain gain" in that it benefits from the immigration of foreign professionals. The American medical field, for example, has depended heavily on foreign medical graduates to alleviate past shortages in medical personnel. These immigrants also represent a considerable financial gain for the U.S. If you consider that a medical education costs approximately

\$50,000, the 2,865 physicians and dentists that immigrated to the U.S. in 1977 represent a \$143 million gain for the U.S. Not all of the professionals are graduates of foreign schools, however. Many others were trained in the U.S. at U.S. expense, but never returned to their countries.

The developed, industrialized countries have been accused of hindering the progress of less developed countries by enticing their most skilled and talented citizens to leave. In 1967, less developed country members of the United Nations introduced a resolution demanding that developed countries change their immigration policies, encourage foreign students to learn skills that are needed in their native coun-

tries, and encourage them to return when their schooling is completed.

Others have said that the loss of highly skilled and talented scientists and physicians is not as detrimental to poorer countries as one would think. The world in general ultimately benefits from the discoveries made by these individuals, who are likely to be more productive in the place of their own choosing. Another advantage is the money, or remittances, sent home by the migrants. This money often represents a major source of income for the native countries.

Some researchers argue that the phenomenon is less a "brain drain" than a "brain overflow." In some countries there is an imbalance between the country's capacity to pro-

## Present U.S. Immigration Policy

### I. Immigrants Without Numerical Limitations:

- Spouses, unmarried children under age 21, and parents of U.S. citizens;
- Ministers (and their families) needed by an established religious order;
- Employees or retired employees (and their families) of the U.S. government;
- Former U.S. citizens.

### II. Native American Indians: Born in Canada but possessing at least 50 percent U.S. Indian "blood" may freely cross the U.S.-Canadian border.

### III. Refugees: Under the terms of the Refugee Act of 1980, the total number of refugees to be admitted each year is determined by the president in consultation with Congress with a maximum annual limit of 50,000, except when justified by the national interest or unforeseen circumstances.

### IV. Numerically Limited, Preference Qualified: Up to 270,000 immigrants are admitted each year under the preference system. Of these, a maximum of 20,000 people can come from any one country. Among the applicants from each country, eligibility is determined by date of application according to the preferences listed below. (Each preference classification is assigned a maximum percentage of the worldwide total of 270,000 immigrants. Unused visas in "higher" preferences, with the exception of the job-related ones, are passed on for use by applicants qualifying under "lower" preferences from countries that have not yet reached their 20,000 quota.)

- **First Preference:** Unmarried sons and daughters of U.S. citizens and their children. (20 percent)
- **Second Preference:** Spouses, unmarried sons and daughters of permanent resident aliens, and their children. (26 percent)
- **Third Preference:** Members of the professions of exceptional ability in the sciences or arts and their spouses and children. (10 percent)
- **Fourth Preference:** Married sons and daughters of U.S. citizens and their spouses and children. (10 percent)
- **Fifth Preference:** Brothers and sisters of adult U.S. citizens and their spouses and children. (24 percent)
- **Sixth Preference:** Workers in skilled or unskilled occupations in which laborers are in short supply in the U.S. and their spouses and children. (10 percent)
- **Nonpreference:** If after all people qualifying under the six preferences have received visas, and the 270,000 total has not been reached, other people may be admitted in chronological order of application within the 20,000 per country restrictions.

Source: U.S. Departments of Justice, Labor and State, Interagency Task Force on Immigration Policy, Staff Report, Washington, DC, March 1979, pp. 36; and *Immigration and Public Policy: Who Can Become an American? The American Experiment: E Pluribus Unum, Part One*. (Newton, MA: Education Development Center, 1981 Field-test Edition), pp. 44-45.

duce professionals and its ability to employ them productively. The universities, in an effort to offer the most "modern" education possible, produce professionals that are not suited to the jobs available or in numbers so great they are unable to find jobs.

The same is often true of individuals from less developed countries who train in the U.S. or another industrialized country. Their native countries are in desperate need, for example, of general practitioner physicians with a knowledge of methods of lowering infant mortality. Instead, their training may emphasize diseases of the elderly or a special type of medicine, such as neurosurgery. When and if the professionals return to their country, they discover that they are vastly overqualified for the available jobs, and are frustrated because they are unable to make use of their high-level skills and knowledge—a phenomenon referred to by an Indian social psychologist who immigrated to the U.S. as "brain-down-the-drain."

**Q. What are the economic impacts of current levels of immigration?**

**A.** This is the big question and one beset by controversy and polarized viewpoints. Looking back at the historical record, it is easy to see that immigration has had a positive, energizing effect on this nation. According to Dr. Lawrence Fuchs, former executive director of the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy:

Most Americans recognize the value of immigrants. All research shows that immigrants are extremely productive. They contribute to economic growth. They enrich our cultural and social life. Accepting immigrants into the United States also shows the world how confident we are about our ideals and institutions.<sup>2</sup>

However, many people feel that given current high numbers of legal immigrants and refugees and an unknown but sizeable number of illegal entrants, the situation may be out of control. Some point out that immigrants in the past made their most positive contributions early in this century when the U.S. was still relatively unpopulated and



Many highly trained scientists migrate to the U.S. when they cannot find satisfying jobs at home.

The Rockefeller Foundation

when there was a need for immigrant labor as America became increasingly industrialized and urban. Today, with a population of 232 million in mid-1982 and an unemployment rate the highest it has been since the Great Depression (April 1982 statistics), the situation is different and far more complex. In addition, the impact of legal immigration is likely to be different from illegal immigration, and within the legal framework, those entering through normal procedures are likely to have an impact different from the refugees.

In trying to assess the impact of illegal immigration, central questions arise: Do illegal immigrants take jobs that legal residents and citizens would otherwise have? Do illegal residents use social services at U.S. taxpayers' expense?

A 1979 report from the Interagency Task Force on Immigration Policy (made up of the U.S. Departments of Justice, Labor and State) concluded that the impact of illegal immigration on employment depends on the numbers of immigrants and the employment situation in the U.S. In a time when unemployment is high, large numbers of illegal immigrants are likely to take jobs from those with a similar level of job skills. Because the majority of illegal immigrants are unskilled or have low skills, they are most likely to take jobs from low-skilled resident workers.

It has often been reported that low-paid jobs in agriculture, manufacturing and service industries are

filled by illegal immigrants because native workers don't want them (i.e., won't work for low wages under poor working conditions). This may be true, but the availability of cheap, illegal labor keeps the wages and working conditions from rising to a level that would attract native workers, according to the Interagency report. Employers say that to raise wages to a high enough point to attract resident workers would force them out of business or force them to raise the prices of products or services so high that they would no longer be affordable to the general public. This is a possibility, according to the Interagency Task Force, and is something that needs to be taken into account when immigration reforms are proposed.

Another study carried out by the General Accounting Office in March 1980 reported that, based on the very limited information available, of undocumented workers, those in the North and East United States appear to have the highest incomes. They contribute more through taxes than they receive in benefits. However, they are likely to be taking jobs from local residents. Undocumented workers in the South and West appear to earn lower wages on the average, but receive more in benefits. They are less likely to take jobs away from native workers.

Surveying other available studies, articles and interviews, one finds a mixed picture of data and opinion. For example, Los Angeles County Supervisor Pete Schabarum estimated that \$50 million is spent annually on illegal residents' medical expenses, mostly hospitalizations related to tuberculosis and childbirth. The INS estimated the annual cost to taxpayers for services to illegal residents is \$13 billion, not including indirect costs of unemployment and welfare for legal residents who cannot find work as a consequence of the illegal immigrants' presence.

However, immigration expert David North conducted a study which found that over 77 percent of illegal aliens apprehended around the country by the INS had social security taxes withheld from their paychecks; 73 percent had federal income taxes withheld although 32 percent had filed for refunds; 44 percent had hospitalization pay-

<sup>2</sup>Immigration and Public Policy: Who Can Become An American?, p. 93

ments withheld. North reported that use of public assistance was slight: 27 percent used hospitals or clinics; less than four percent collected unemployment insurance; less than four percent had children in schools; only half of one percent received welfare payments.

The contention that illegal immigrants use fewer resources than suspected received support from information used in the landmark June 1982 Supreme Court decision. The Court decided, 5 to 4, that Texas acted unconstitutionally in denying illegal alien children free public education. In part, the state had based its argument on the costs to educate an estimated 110,000 illegal alien children. However, in 1980, while the case was on appeal, only 11,000 illegal aliens enrolled, less than one percent of the total school population. The basis of the Supreme Court decision is the 14th Amendment, which says that no state may "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws," a provision which a June 18 *Washington Post* editorial believes may invite future lawsuits involving welfare, food stamps and other social programs.

Charles B. Keely of the Population Council and Michael S. Teitelbaum, former staff director of the U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Population—two well-known immigration experts—agree that illegal immigration has mixed economic results. Those who benefit are the immigrants themselves (should their lot be better than what they left behind), the employers, middle-class consumers, and some native workers whose jobs are made possible by immigrant labor. The losers are lower-income groups of U.S. citizens whose jobs are taken or whose wages and working conditions deteriorate. Some might also add to this latter category large numbers of illegal immigrants who are exploited and denied the rights that come with legal status.

However, each expert comes to a different conclusion. According to Keely, "... the data are scanty, but on balance it seems likely that the U.S. economy as a whole is not harmed by illegal immigration."<sup>3</sup> Teitelbaum concludes: "The predominant expert view, therefore, is that large-scale immigration of low-skill workers cannot be expected to

contribute to overall economic well-being over the foreseeable future...."<sup>4</sup>

The Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, established by Congress and the President in 1979, issued its final report in March 1981. It assessed a great number of research studies and found "... there is almost no consensus regarding the impact of illegal immigration on U.S. society."<sup>5</sup>

While the opinions of economists who testified before the Select Commission on the impact of legal immigration varied, the Commission's executive director noted in the final report:

... Immigration has been and continues to be a force for economic growth in the United States and, as a consequence, has a beneficial effect on wages and employment possibilities for most U.S. citizens over time.<sup>6</sup>

**Q. What are other impacts of high levels of immigration, legal and illegal?**

**A. According to demographer Leon F. Bouvier, the effect of fertility**

changes is stronger than that of migration changes in determining the future size of the U.S. If there is an increase of just 10 percent in the total fertility rate from 1.8 to 2.0 births per woman, seven million people will be added to the U.S. population in 20 years, 24 million in 50 years and 50 million in 100 years. A 50 percent increase in net migration, on the other hand, from 500,000 to 750,000 annually (with fertility still at 1.8 births per woman) will increase the U.S. population by six million in 20 years, 17 million in 50 years and 33 million in 100 years.

Nonetheless, the 1981 level of legal immigration represents about 2.5 percent of annual population growth and together with illegal immigration (if the 500,000 estimate is used), 50 percent of annual growth. Bouvier estimates that with a net migration of 500,000 legal immigrants and a 1.8 total fertility rate, in 50 years 32,768,000 people will be post-1980 immigrants and their descendants in the population.

Bouvier projects other demographic impacts of immigration on schools, the labor force and on regions. If net migration were sustained at one million annually, and fertility remains at 1.8 births per woman, the proportion of elementary school students in the nation who are post-1980 immigrants or their descendants could reach 43 percent in 100 years. Over 41 percent of the labor force and 32 per-

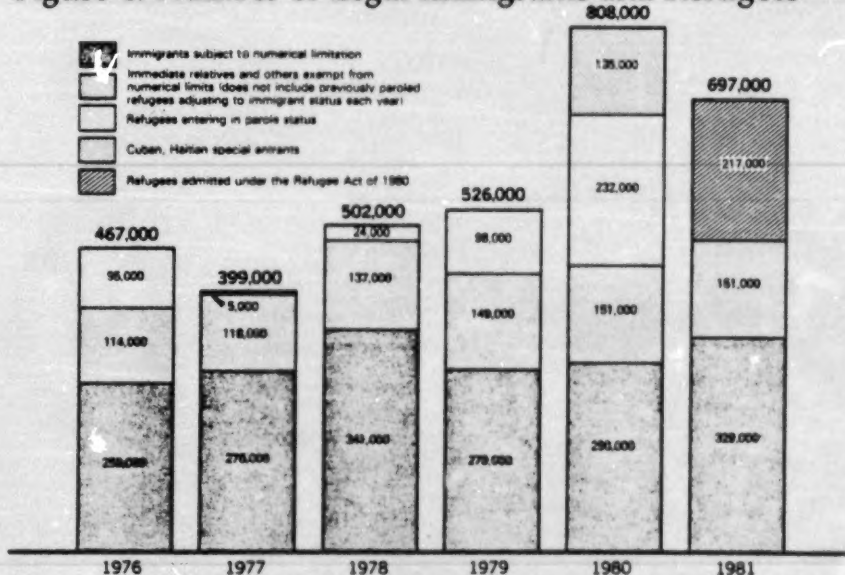
<sup>3</sup>Charles B. Keely, "Illegal Immigration," *Scientific American*, Vol. 246, No. 3 (March 1982), p. 40.

<sup>4</sup>Michael S. Teitelbaum, "Right Versus Right: Immigration and Refugee Policy in the United States," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (Fall 1980), p. 38.

<sup>5</sup>Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, *U.S. Immigration Policy and the National Interest* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), p. 37.

<sup>6</sup>Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, p. 99.

**Figure 4. Number of Legal Immigrants and Refugees**



Source: Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, *U.S. Immigration Policy and the National Interest, Final Report* (Washington, DC: 1981).

cent of the elderly in 2080 would be post-1980 immigrants or their descendants. Although immigrants may be competing with the current baby boom cohort or group (born 1947-63) for jobs, when the baby bust cohort (born after 1963) become adults, the size of the labor force may fall somewhat, calling for an increased number of immigrant, women or elderly workers.

The impact of immigration is not felt evenly by all states. Of the 4.5 million permanent resident aliens reporting their addresses to the INS in 1980, over 70 percent resided in six states: California, New York, Texas, Florida, Illinois and New Jersey. California is the state most favored by Asians. Latin Americans also choose California followed by New York, Texas and Florida; these four states together are the intended residence of three-fourths of all Latin American and Caribbean immigrants. New York is the intended residence of immigrants coming from other parts of the world with California a close second. Given continued low fertility and net annual migration of one million, two-thirds of California's population in 2080 will consist of post-1980 immigrants or their descendants.

Some communities, like the Miami area in Florida and certain counties in California must deal with a disproportionately large number of immigrants and refugees. A March 15, 1982 story in the *Washington Post* recounted one state's dilemma:

Faced with the cancellation of federal benefits to refugees who have been in the country for 18 months or more, Florida tried a novel solution: it sent letters to all 38,000 Cubans and Haitians affected, listing 10 other states where medical and financial assistance could be available. . . . Florida officials contend that refugee assistance is a federal responsibility. Purely because of geography, they argue, Florida's state and local governments have incurred costs of \$150 million in refugee services not reimbursed by Washington during the influx of 150,000 Cuban and Haitian refugees in the past two years.

It must be noted, however, that the earlier Cuban immigrants have contributed greatly to Miami's economic and cultural vitality.

According to Michael Teitelbaum,

one of the major social concerns is that "American immigration flows have come to be dominated by immigrants speaking a single foreign language—Spanish—contrary to the intention of recent immigration reforms to encourage all forms of diversity and pluralism."<sup>7</sup> Teitelbaum estimates that 50 percent or more of legal and illegal immigrants to the U.S. are native Spanish speakers.

The Hispanic population is now the most rapidly growing subgroup in the U.S.; some Hispanic leaders see the Spanish language as a symbol of cultural unity and power and have pressed for bilingualism in education and in government services. Some U.S. citizens see the prospect of a bilingual society in the future and fear that it could lead to the kind of divisiveness that exists between French-speaking Quebec and the English-speaking parts of Canada.

Others see bilingual measures as temporary but necessary ways to speed up adjustment to a new country. Studies of bilingual education have found that, although it is costly, it accelerates the rate at which children learn English. Many teachers have reported that although there is initial alarm when large numbers of non-English speaking students move into a school district, things work out well when there is community cooperation and that students learn a great deal from each other.

It is too early to tell what the effects of Hispanic-dominated immigration may be in the future. Simi-

<sup>7</sup>Teitelbaum, "Right Versus Right: Immigration and Refugee Policy in the United States," p. 20.



Some contend that U.S. foreign policy—rather than basic fairness—often dictates who is considered a refugee.

lar fears existed but eventually evaporated earlier in this century when immigration was dominated by Southern and Eastern Europeans. It is also important to state that while the Spanish language is shared by a great number of the new immigrants, they come from a wide variety of countries and even races. Differences among them are surely as great as the common thread of language; fears of a "Hispanic culture" may be greatly exaggerated.

**Q. What immigration reform policies have been proposed?**

A. There are a very few who suggest an "Open Door" policy, with no limits whatsoever on immigration, and a very few who advocate that all immigration stop. Between these extremes, proposals range widely. A group called Conservatives for Immigration Reform advocates a moratorium on immigration until the U.S. "can absorb the numbers already here" with no amnesty for illegal aliens already residing for some time in the U.S. Negative Population Growth recommends that total immigration equal emigration (estimated at about 100,000 annually).

The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) advocates an overall ceiling of 350,000 as an interim measure to be periodically reassessed by Congress. Refugees and immediate relatives of U.S. citizens should be given top priority but should be part of the ceiling; illegal immigration should be eliminated through penalties for employers, worker identification cards and increased enforcement of immigration law. Amnesty programs should wait until borders are secure.

Other groups have more specific interests. The National Center for Immigrants' Rights is particularly concerned that immigration and refugee policies be applied with equality toward all nations and races. They feel that our foreign policy often dictates who is considered a refugee: those fleeing a Communist dictatorship (Cuba) are more likely to be welcomed than those fleeing right-wing dictatorships or dire poverty (El Salvador and Haiti). William Raspberry of the *Washington Post* (March 3, 1982) says that it is hard to think of America's recently ended treat-

UNHCR PHOTO BY S. FARKAS

ment of Haitian entrants—incarceration in jails and squalid camps—as anything but racism. Others assert that economic oppression is often a direct result of political oppression and defining refugees as only those fleeing the latter is a false distinction.

Others like Georgetown University's Institute for Public Representation argue that those seeking asylum (already in the United States but afraid to return to their countries because of fear of persecution) are not accorded due process in appealing deportations. As of May 1982, large numbers of Ethiopians who fled their country after a socialist takeover were fighting in court what they consider an arbitrary decision by the Reagan administration to deport them. The administration contends that "conditions in Ethiopia have stabilized."

Many large-scale growers would like to see a return of the "Bracero" temporary worker program. The AFL-CIO and most other unions repudiate this solution as undermining American labor and instituting a "slave labor" force. While many proposals would penalize employers hiring undocumented workers, the League of United Latin American Citizens contends that this plan would create incentives for employers to discriminate against foreign-looking employees and job-seekers.

Although they vary widely in the policies they recommend, many groups advocating reform share common principles. For example, the National Forum on Immigration and Refugee Policy, a consortium of 25 groups with diverse views on immigration, ascribes to the following:

- It is in the national interest to preserve America's tradition as a land of immigrants, while recognizing the need to limit immigration appropriately and to undertake efforts to alleviate economic and political conditions causing people to flee their homelands.
- Immigration and refugee admissions policy must be free of racial, sex, ethnic, religious or ideological bias.
- All people should be accorded fundamental human rights, including due process, regardless of immigration status.
- Immigration policy should



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recognize the importance of family reunification and sanctuary from persecution and civil strife.

- Immigration policy should integrate domestic and international considerations; federal, state and local concerns and economic, social, cultural and legal factors.

Among the most important proposals for reform are the recommendations of the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy. These were submitted to Congress and the President, in March of 1981, after 19 months research, review and testimony. Among its key recommendations were the following:

- improved border enforcement and increased funding of the Border Patrol;
- a fully automated system so that the INS can keep track of alien arrivals and departures;
- endorsement of the Refugee Act of 1980 (see page 4);
- legislation making it illegal to hire undocumented workers;
- a reliable method of identification for employees, proving legal status;
- a program to legalize illegal aliens now in the U.S. (amnesty);
- an increase in numerically limited immigration from the present 270,000 to 350,000 per year, increased by 100,000 extra per year for the first five years to wipe out backlogs;
- continued unlimited admission

of immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, including their unmarried adult children and grandparents;

- retention of the English-language requirement for becoming a naturalized citizen, with exceptions for older people.

Later in 1981, President Reagan asked Congress to enact legislation to permit the U.S. government to control the influx of undocumented aliens. His proposals included the power to declare an "immigration emergency" and to seal U.S. points of entry, while U.S. armed forces would be authorized to stop ships on the high seas suspected of carrying illegal aliens. Other proposals called for quicker deportations, employer sanctions and a Temporary Mexican Workers Act.

However, Congress has drawn up its own immigration reforms, which are closer to the Select Commission's recommendations than to the administration's proposals. Sponsored by Romano Mazzoli in the House of Representatives and Alan K. Simpson in the Senate, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1982 has already undergone several changes in subcommittee "mark-ups." As of June 1982 its main provisions are:

- A numerical ceiling of 425,000 legal admissions per year (the House subcommittee has raised this to 450,000), not including refugees. One hundred thousand of the immigrant visas will be allocated to "independent" immigrants

(workers, investors and "special" immigrants such as ministers). Of those remaining, first access is to immediate family members (not including siblings) of U.S. citizens; then all others.

- Refugees will continue to be admitted as determined by consultation between the Administration and Congress.
- Immigrant visas will remain limited to 20,000 per year for any one country, except for Mexico and Canada, which will receive 40,000 each, and can use each other's unused visas from the previous year.
- Illegal immigrants who have been in continuous residence in the U.S. since January 1, 1978, can immediately apply for permanent resident status; those arriving after that date but before January 1, 1980 (1982 in the Senate version) can apply for temporary resident status, and after two more years, permanent resi-

dent status. All others may be deported.

- After a one-year moratorium, employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants will be fined \$1,000 for the first offense, \$2,000 for the second offense. Recruiters of illegal aliens will be subject to criminal prosecution.
- Prospective employees will be required to provide documentation of their citizenship or legal resident status.

This bill, which is sure to undergo more changes before a vote is taken to determine whether it will become law (probably in late 1982 or early 1983), has received wide support. Some groups believe that refugees should be included in the numerical ceilings, and that amnesty for illegal residents should wait until the borders are secure. Others think that immigration reform should be within the context of an overall population policy for the U.S. Still others object to the employer penalties. Nonetheless, a

Washington Post editorial of March 29, 1982 entitled "The Right Immigration Bill" reflected the sentiments of many concerned with immigration issues:

Control and compassion should be the twin objectives of American immigration policy and legislation introduced by Senator Alan Simpson (R-WY) and Representative Romano Mazzoli (D-KY) has these two goals in mind. Any bill that has the bipartisan cosponsorship of the House and Senate chairmen of the immigration subcommittees is off to a good start. This one deserves to be.

Immigration policy is a tough issue, beset by poor data, studies which reach opposite conclusions, emotionality and conflicting values. When the values in conflict are our traditional generosity vs. reasonable self-protection, decisions become even more difficult. Compromise is inevitable. Reaching the best compromises—in spite of the obstacles—is at the heart of the U.S. political process.

## Glossary

**Alien.** Any person living in a country who is not a citizen of that country.

**Amnesty.** Pardon for a past offense; in the case of immigration, for illegal entry, with permission to stay in the country as a permanent resident.

**Asylum.** Permission to stay in the country when a visitor fears persecution or death upon return to his or her homeland.

**Developing Countries (Less Developed Countries).** Those countries having lower levels of per capita income and modernization than other countries.

**Emigrant.** A person who moves out of a country to live in some other country.

**Illegal Immigrant (Undocumented Worker, Illegal Alien).** A person who is in a country illegally through entry without inspection, as a visa abuser or through use of fraudulent documents.

**Immigrant.** A person who is admitted into a country to reside there permanently.

**Migration.** A change of residence which is intended to be permanent and which involves crossing political boundaries. It may be international (immigration) or internal.

**Nonimmigrant.** A person admitted into a country for a specific, temporary period of time such as a tourist or foreign student.

**Naturalized Citizen.** A permanent immigrant who has been granted citizenship by the country into which he or she has immigrated.

**Permanent Resident Alien.** Those who are legally entitled to live and work in the U.S. and eventually become citizens after five years' residency if they meet the qualifications. Until they become

citizens, such persons cannot vote, hold elective office or be employed by the federal government.

**Replacement Level Fertility.** The level of fertility at which couples, on the average, are having only enough children to replace themselves.

**Refugees.** Those persons forced to leave their countries and unable to return because of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

**Zero Population Growth.** A population with a growth rate of zero because births plus immigration equal deaths plus emigration.

Source: Robert H. Weller and Leon F. Bouvier. *Population: Demography and Policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press), 1981.

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